

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No.	:	10/773,487	Confirmation No.:	6629
Applicant	:	Merchant <i>et al.</i>		
Filed	:	February 6, 2004		
TC/A.U.	:	2155		
Examiner	:	Eng, David		
Docket No.	:	02453.0021.NPUS00		
Customer No.	:	27194	Date: January 22, 2007	

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

*Mail Stop RCE*  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Kindly amend the subject application as follows, and enter the following remarks, before continuing examination thereof. All remarks and amendments herein are made without prejudice.

This preliminary amendment is accompanied by a constructive petition for a one-month extension, which extends through January 21, 2007 (a Sunday) the time period for responding to the outstanding Final Office Action mailed September 21, 2006.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 7 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims** begin on page 2 of this paper.